

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**  
**Department of Education and Skills**

**DEIS EVALUATION**

**REPORT**

<b>School Name</b>	Sunday's Well G N S
<b>School Address</b>	Strawberry Hill Blarney Road Cork
<b>Roll number</b>	02707F

**Date of Evaluation: 24-09-2018**



---

An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna  
Department of  
Education and Skills

## **DEIS EVALUATION**

In 2017, the Department published the DEIS (*Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools*) Plan. The aim of this plan is to ensure better educational outcomes for learners in schools from disadvantaged communities and to maximise the chances of every child getting the best possible opportunity to fulfil her/his potential in life.

Schools are expected to develop action plans for improvement in the following areas (referred to as the DEIS themes): attendance; retention; transitions; literacy; numeracy; partnership with parents; partnership with other schools and educational providers, and with external agencies. Post-primary schools are also expected to develop action plans for improvement in examination attainment.

The DEIS Evaluation model evaluates and reports on the school's action planning for improvement.

## **HOW TO READ THIS REPORT**

During this inspection, the inspectors evaluated the school's action planning for improvement under the following headings:

1. DEIS action planning for improvement
2. DEIS themes

Inspectors describe the quality of each of these areas using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision in each area.

The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.
2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.
4. The Child Safeguarding Statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.
5. The records of the last three board of management meetings record a child protection oversight report that meet the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017.
6. The board of management has ensured that arrangements are in place to provide information to all school personnel on the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017

7. School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE, Wellbeing).
8. Child protection records are maintained in a secure location.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

## DEIS Evaluation

### INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

<b>Dates of inspection</b>	<b>24-09-2018- 26-09-2018</b>
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with principal and relevant staff</li> <li>• Examination of school's current action plans for improvement</li> <li>• Observation of DEIS-related activities and interventions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent focus-group interview</li> <li>• Analysis of parent and pupil questionnaires</li> <li>• Observation of teaching and learning</li> <li>• Examination of pupils' work</li> <li>• Interaction with pupils</li> <li>• Feedback to principal and relevant staff</li> </ul>

### SCHOOL CONTEXT

Sunday's Well Girls' National School, Cork was a DEIS Band 2 school until February of 2017 whereupon it was categorised as a DEIS Band 1 school. This resulted in an increase of staff along with increased funding and access to continuous professional development opportunities. The school currently has a staffing of an administrative principal, eight mainstream class teachers, five special education teachers and a shared home-school-community liaison (HSCL) coordinator. The school also participates in the School Completion Programme (SCP). At the time of the evaluation there were 177 girls enrolled in the school.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### FINDINGS

The key findings in relation to the DEIS action planning for improvement process in this school are the following:

- The overall quality of DEIS action planning for improvement is good; school leaders ensure that a collaborative and focused approach is taken to leading the DEIS action planning process.
- While the overall quality of target setting is good, some targets require review to ensure that they are specific and measurable and that a focus is maintained on raising the attainment of pupils with the greatest needs.
- The overall DEIS planning in literacy and numeracy has informed high quality teaching and learning; however, the realisation of whole-school targets in numeracy would be enhanced through increased use of strand-specific assessment data to inform the organisation of differentiated learning activities for pupils with varying attainment levels.
- The school implements a variety of strategies and interventions in regard to each DEIS theme; teachers plan and work collaboratively to ensure that these result in positive learning outcomes and experiences for pupils.
- While year-on-year improvements in pupil attendance are noted, the attendance of a significant number of pupils remains a priority for development.
- Positive, collaborative relationships, which benefit pupils, have been developed with parents and with a range of statutory and voluntary agencies.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Aspects of the DEIS action planning for improvement process that require development in this school include:

- Target setting should be further developed to ensure maximum benefit for all pupil outcomes at an individual classroom and whole-school level.
- Teachers should use strand-specific assessment data to a greater extent to inform the organisation of differentiated learning activities for pupils with varying attainment levels.
- The range of strategies aimed at improving school attendance should be extended.

## **DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. DEIS ACTION PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT**

- The overall quality of DEIS action planning for improvement is good. Under the very effective leadership of the principal, the literacy, numeracy and HSCL coordinators ensure that a collaborative approach is taken to leading the DEIS action planning process. This has resulted in a commendable whole-school approach to school improvement. Of particular note is the high level of staff engagement in professional development opportunities which are relevant to the areas prioritised.
- The school has very successfully created a safe and supportive environment for its pupils. Great emphasis is placed on developing a coordinated whole-school approach to the delivery of mental health and wellbeing initiatives. Care is taken also to identify and support pupils who may be vulnerable or at risk. DEIS financial resources are appropriately managed and careful accounts of expenditure are maintained. The appointment of extra teachers arising from the school's designation to DEIS band 1 status has, however, posed challenges to the present school accommodation and the deployment of staff. A building project has been recently approved and it is expected that this will allow for more variety in the organisation of support for pupils with identified learning needs.
- The overall quality of target setting is good. The school is highly praised for generating and using a wide range of assessment data to identify priorities for development. Improvement targets have been established for each of the DEIS themes. Some of these targets are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound (SMART). However, other targets require review to ensure that they are more specific and measurable. Care should be taken to ensure that whole-school targets are identified for each DEIS theme and that a focus is maintained on raising the attainment of pupils with the greatest needs.
- A very wide range of carefully selected initiatives and strategies is implemented across the school. While these initiatives address the prioritised areas for development, there remains a need to ensure greater alignment between the target-setting process and the identification and implementation of initiatives. The whole-school approach to implementing these initiatives is highly commended. Teachers plan and work collaboratively to ensure that the selected interventions impact positively on teachers' individual and collective practice and that they result in positive learning outcomes and experiences for pupils. The impact of initiatives is measured regularly with very good examples of pre and post-intervention assessment. These practices are highly praised. The analysis of longitudinal data as it pertains to individual pupils and classes should assist further in determining the impact of strategies and interventions on pupil learning outcomes.

## 2. DEIS THEMES

### 2.1 Literacy and Numeracy

#### **Literacy**

- The quality of action planning for improvement in literacy is good. The school has engaged in a very comprehensive analysis of standardised tests results and teacher-designed tasks to establish baseline levels of pupil attainment in oral language, reading, comprehension, writing and spelling.
- Informed by this comprehensive data analysis, the school has established targets for improvements in pupil learning outcomes in literacy. These targets vary from being very specific to being general in nature. To further enhance the target setting process it is recommended that generated data and the learning outcomes outlined in the Primary Language Curriculum be used to a greater extent. Care should be taken to ensure that targets aimed at improved learning outcomes for pupils with low attainment are also devised.
- A very wide range of initiatives has been implemented to enhance pupils' attainment in literacy. Of particular note is the manner in which practice is informed by the *Aistear* framework in the infant classes which is impacting very positively on pupils' language development. Other initiatives which are impacting on pupil learning outcomes include Reading Recovery, station teaching, Literacy Lift-off, show and tell and the SUAS Time to Read project. These initiatives are very well implemented in classrooms and there is clear evidence that they are enhancing pupil learning outcomes and experiences.

#### **Numeracy**

- The overall quality of action planning for improvement in numeracy is good. Using high quality assessment data the school has identified the strands of measures and number as the focus for improvement. Targets setting in the area of numeracy is good. Whole-school improvement targets have been set. The realisation of these targets would be improved through the use of strand-specific assessment data to inform the organisation of differentiated learning activities for pupils with high and low attainment levels. Care should also be taken to ensure that targets are set for pupils whose attainment is a cause for concern.
- As with literacy, interventions and strategies are carefully selected to address the prioritised areas for improvement. These are implemented very effectively in classroom settings. Active learning was a feature of all lessons observed and mental mathematics was an integral part of pupil learning. The use of Maths Recovery strategies in team teaching was particularly noteworthy as was the integration of mathematical skills with *Aistear* activities in the infant classes. Whole-school actions in relation to the teaching of mathematical language were implemented consistently in learning settings. Maths for Fun is impacting positively on the promotion of positive dispositions towards Mathematics and pupils are making incremental progress in their attainment.

## **2.2 Attendance, Retention, Transitions**

- The overall quality of action planning for improvement in the areas of attendance, retention and transitions is good. Targets have been established to improve attendance and punctuality. Pupils with high levels of absenteeism have been identified for support. There is evidence that the school in general, and HSCL coordinator in particular, have established very positive relationships with parents. Effective monitoring and support for pupils and families experiencing difficulties with attendance are in place. A range of initiatives has been implemented and year-on-year improvements in attendance are noted. However, despite these efforts the attendance of a significant number of pupils remains a priority. To address the particular needs of this group, it is recommended that the range of strategies aimed at improving school attendance be extended. Increased efforts at incentivising regular attendance should also be made at both whole-school and classroom level.
- The school is commended for ensuring full retention levels and that all pupils are progressing to post-primary education. Productive links have been made with pre-schools and post-primary schools in the locality. The school aims to continue to implement actions and strategies which have proven successful and beneficial to date. Pupils, in their responses to questionnaires issued as part of the evaluation, report that they will all progress to and remain in secondary school with the majority stating that they would like to go to college. Well-structured and positive support is also delivered to targeted pupils through the School Completion Programme.

## **2.3 Partnership with parents and others**

- DEIS action planning for partnership with parents and others is of a high standard. Targets and actions to improve parental involvement in the life of the school are outlined in the DEIS plan. The HSCL coordinator promotes positive relationships with parents through meetings and home visits. In addition he encourages them to participate in curriculum-related school activities and personal development courses. Support for parents includes initiatives such as Maths for Fun and shared reading and these have a positive effect on consolidating links between home and school. The outcomes of a meeting with a focus group of parents combined with an analysis of parental questionnaires reveal very positive attitudes among parents towards the school and very high expectation levels for their children in education. They also report feeling included both in the life of the school and in the education of their children. A very high proportion of those surveyed stated that their child is doing well in school. The school communicates regularly with parents and it involves them meaningfully in their children's education.
- Very productive communication has been established with the wider school community. The school has established good relationships with a range of external agencies in order to support pupils to remain in the school and to experience success. These links benefit the children, their parents and the operation of the school in general. The school's engagement with the Cork City Partnership, Young Knocknaheeny and with the local Credit Union is reported as being particularly beneficial.
- Many community initiatives are successfully implemented. These include Music Generation, homework clubs, after-school activities and the One Book One Community project amongst others.

## THE INSPECTORATE'S QUALITY CONTINUUM

Inspectors describe the quality of provision in the school using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown below. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very good</b> applies where the quality of the areas evaluated is of a very high standard. The very few areas for improvement that exist do not significantly impact on the overall quality of provision. For some schools in this category the quality of what is evaluated is <b>outstanding</b> and provides an example for other schools of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful; few areas for improvement; notable; of a very high standard. Excellent; outstanding; exceptionally high standard, with very significant strengths; exemplary
<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b> applies where the strengths in the areas evaluated clearly outweigh the areas in need of improvement. The areas requiring improvement impact on the quality of pupils'/students' learning. The school needs to build on its strengths and take action to address the areas identified as requiring improvement in order to achieve a <i>very good</i> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b> applies where the quality of provision is adequate. The strengths in what is being evaluated just outweigh the shortcomings. While the shortcomings do not have a significant negative impact they constrain the quality of the learning experiences and should be addressed in order to achieve a better standard.	Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Fair</b> applies where, although there are some strengths in the areas evaluated, deficiencies or shortcomings that outweigh those strengths also exist. The school will have to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is satisfactory or better.	Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils'/students' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
<b>Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b> applies where there are serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated. Immediate and coordinated whole-school action is required to address the areas of concern. In some cases, the intervention of other agencies may be required to support improvements.	Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**



## **Part A : Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The board is pleased that report has highlighted what the school is doing well, particularly in relation to

- choices of strategies and interventions
- collaboration intra- staff and between staff and parents
- continuous professional development engagement
- whole school planning
- thorough and varied assessments and their utilisation in planning for improvement, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Team Teaching strategies in Numeracy and Literacy
- Partnership with Parents
- Productive communication with all members of the school community
- Transitions

It recognises that there is clear evidence that the selected initiatives are enhancing pupil learning outcomes and experiences.

The Report also gives clear and welcome guidance for areas for improvement with focus on

- The need to ensure that ALL targets are SMART Targets
- The need to identify both whole school and specific group targets in certain areas
- The priority that needs to be given to the attendance of a number of children

This advice and insight, as actioned below, will serve to ensure continued and visible success for all pupils, maximising learning and bolstering achievement.

## **Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.**

The school has;

- reviewed its target setting process to ensure that all targets are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timed. Whole-school targets now give a clear focus to guide individual teacher practice.
- reviewed its target setting in Numeracy: strand specific assessment data is now used to inform the organisation of differentiated learning of activities to meet the varying attainment levels of pupils, with particular emphasis on pupils with the greatest learning needs.
- coordinated the generated data from assessment with the learning outcomes of the Primary Language Curriculum . This has clarified the baselines for the target areas of the Language Curriculum at each relevant class level.
- identified a wider range of strategies to improve and incentivise regular pupil attendance at whole-school and individual class level.